

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

October 31, 2008

Alex Kummant
President & Chief Executive Officer
Amtrak
60 Massachusetts Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mr. Kummant:


We are writing to request expedited implementation of section 224(a)(1) of Public Law 110-432. This section requires a rail service study "to determine whether to reinstate passenger rail service along the (Pioneer) route or along segments of the route."

As you know, The Pioneer Route provided passenger service through the western states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming. Since the Pioneer Route was discontinued in 1997, those communities have been without Amtrak passenger service. For many rural northwesterners, this route represented the only major intercity transportation link to the rest of the country.

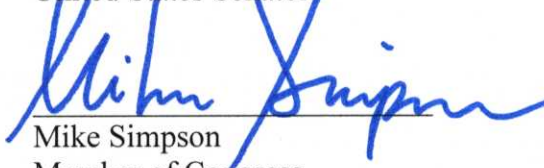
We have heard from families in our states who have been waiting more than a decade for rail service to return. Recent sharp increases in Amtrak ridership show that more and more people are turning to intercity rail for transportation. While urban areas are experiencing many of these increases, travelers in rural parts of the country are also getting on board where Amtrak is available. We believe that there is substantial interest in reinstating the Pioneer Route in our states and returning this economic and transportation network to our communities and neighborhoods. We ask that you immediately implement the study required by section 224 (a) (1) of PL 110-432 as a first step.

We appreciate your leadership in strengthening Amtrak and look forward to working with you to expand intercity passenger rail service in western states.

Sincerely,


Ron Wyden
United States Senator


Mike Crapo
United States Senator


Mike Simpson
Member of Congress


Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress


Greg Walden
Member of Congress